THE

RAGGED SCHOOL UNION Magazine.

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Original Papers.

GLEANINGS FROM THE VINEYARD.

No. I.

ONE YEAR'S WORK.

THERE are some unfortunate persons in the world, who would find it no easy task to give a summary of one year's labour, if such summary only comprised all they had done for the welfare of others, the good of society, and the advancement of Christ's kingdom. Even among those who have "professed a good profession before many witnesses," there is a sad majority, whose hearts have only been set upon buying, and selling, and getting gain. Sometimes this gain so increases, as to remove their dwellings far away from the abodes of the wretched; and to put into their mouths the false excuse, of having no *opportunities* for visiting the abodes of misery, or teaching in a Ragged School. Seldom, when fixing on a residence, does the question find a place among other considerations—how far such a position will affect their opportunities for usefulness, or render them more *or less* the world's benefactors than they were before. We know it is not *fashionable* to follow the example of the "Man of sorrows," nor is it common for Christians to make *many* sacrifices for His sake; but the spirit and precepts of the Gospel are still the same, and they cannot be weakened by infringement. Others there are whose yearly histories consist in fruitless and gloomy conflicts against languor and weariness; nor to such can the railway train, or the bustling watering-place, yield more than a momentary cure. The Ragged School, or the visitor's district, has often done more for the effectual removal of these maladies, than all the "rivers of Damascus."

These thoughts have been suggested to our minds by way of contrast, from the perusal of an Annual Report of a Ragged School,

We fear those documents are not often read, and very seldom fully understood. They must first be read at a public meeting, and however interesting they may be, if they occupy more time than fifteen minutes, the impatient audience will pronounce them too long. Hence, a very general summary of operations can only be given, scarcely sufficient to embody the practical experience of one devoted teacher. The number of children admitted, or who are in regular attendance at school, the amount of money received and expended, and other such statistics, afford but a very feeble idea of the whole transactions of a year. We have no barometer capable of recording the amount of preventative and counteracting influences that have been at work, nor the effects of these upon the masses of heathenism on which they have operated. But it is enough for those who labour, that God owns their efforts, and society reaps the benefit.

In the Report before us, we have presented to our minds an extensive and varied field of operation. Classes are formed for learners of all ages—from the tiny infant, just able to articulate; to its thoughtless, thriftless mother, who knows less of the Gospel than her own child. Nor are the boys and men neglected; from among the former, a host of young tailors and shoemakers are reared, upon so rude a principle, as to prevent them becoming "sweaters," or "sloppers," yet receiving a sufficient knowledge of those trades, to enable them to repair each other's clothes at home, or become more useful colonists abroad. In the "men's school," we find a strange and mixed congregation, composed of drovers, tramps, totters, cadgers, costermongers, thieves, and others. Out of 104 admissions into the ragged company, 50 had been convicted thieves, 40 could read well, 24 not at all, and (which amounts to the same thing) 40 could read indifferently. In this school may be found representatives of all the burglars and blackguards of the country, in whatever shade or shape they are manifested. It therefore requires no small amount of patience and perseverance on the part of voluntary teachers, who will venture to "reprove and exhort" so fierce a company; but even on this rough and rude material, the labours of the year have not been fruitless. At the commencement, when prayer was offered, the petitioner's voice was often drowned by the hootings, brayings, and obscene utterances of these full-grown men, exhibiting a scene of profanation and *matured* depravity, dreadful to contemplate! Now, however, there is order and outward reverence; some have given evidence of satisfactory reformation, for whom situations have been procured, and one has obtained a free passage to America. Who can tell how many murders, robberies, and midnight invasions upon unsuspecting and helpless families, may thus be *prevented*, by the labours of a few devoted Ragged School teachers!

A peculiar interest gathers around the mother's class, to which we have already adverted. It is conducted by a number of ladies, who converse with those mothers whose children attend the Day School, upon religious subjects; induce them to bring their clothes to make or mend, and thus inculcate habits of cleanliness and industry. Those who know the influence of a wise and virtuous mother on her own

family and connections, will be prepared to estimate the importance and immense value of such means of instruction. Nor is it merely in school that such attention is paid to their interests; for they are also visited at their own homes, and encouraged in the performance of religious duties, and habits of domestic care. As evidences of how those privileges are valued by many of these poor and (otherwise) friendless creatures, one mother says, "She blesses God that ever she came to the school, and feels lost when anything prevents her attendance." Another says, "She has for some time past felt herself a sinner, but now she believes that through Christ she has obtained mercy." Strange, that so few ladies are to be found, willing to engage in this needful and blessed work, which promises so rich a reward!

We now conclude our hasty observations with a few cases of usefulness recorded by the teachers, as specimens of the fruits that are being gathered from this well-watered vineyard.

The following case will illustrate the interesting features of a teacher's work, and the precocity of those tiny creatures among whom they labour:—

"One evening we had been reading about the Flood, and Noah having been sent to warn the people before it came. I said, 'Do you know any one like Noah now?' 'Yes,' said a little girl, 'that teacher up the room, who comes to our house—she is our Noah; she tells us how we can be saved when the world is burned up.' Some time after this the same child said, 'I've got something to tell you, teacher; last week our day school teacher was telling us a little story about a cabin boy, who was praying for his captain, who had been ill-treating him. The captain overheard his prayer, and God blessed it to him; and he fell down on his knees, and asked forgiveness. While teacher was speaking, I felt all at once that I was a sinner. I felt so hurt, teacher, I was obliged to cry; I thought about it all night, and ever since; and I thought of what you said one day about believing on Jesus; you said it was to feel that Jesus was my Saviour, and then I did believe.'"

The following instance will afford encouragement to all who are engaged in similar labours; and must forcibly impress upon every heart, the necessity of unwearied well-doing—"In due season ye shall reap *if ye faint not*." The following is the teacher's own statement:—

"W. W., aged 17, has attended the school occasionally for some years, but regularly for some months past. I took a deep interest in him from the first time he entered my class; he was sometimes troublesome, but I have observed him at others give the most earnest attention, while his eyes have glistened, and the tear has fallen down his cheek. During the last four months his conduct has been uniformly good, and I have often observed tears come into his eyes, which the gaze of the careless around him has not suppressed. He is now crossing the wide Atlantic on his way for the west of America. I parted with him on the morning he sailed, and, as he shook my hand, he said, with tears in his eyes, 'I shall never forget your kindness to me; I shall remember you as long as I live.' I said, 'Thank you; I desire you to remember me, and desire your prayers; but above all, I trust you will remember the Lord Jesus Christ. Do you think

he is YOUR *Saviour?*' 'Sir, I think he is—I hope he is.' 'Do you fee that your soul has been benefited by attending the school?' 'Yes, sir,' was his reply; 'I feel quite different from what I used to feel since I have been to the school; I have left off the sins I used to be guilty of, and I think that a change has taken place in my heart; I trust I have been born again.' 'Do you think you will be ashamed to confess Christ before your fellow-passengers, and to acknowledge that you believe in him?' 'No,' he replied; 'I hope I may be able to do good to others, as I have received so much good myself.' This lad took out a bundle of tracts, which he promised to distribute on board the ship."

When passing through the dark and dreary avenues into which the poorest of our London poor are so thickly congregated—when visiting them in their wretched dwellings, from which light, and air, and everything but want and misery seemed to be excluded—we have often thought how dreadful it was to *live* in such places, but still more desolate to *die*. It has been truly said, that "to be weary and know of no resting-place, is the world's hard lot;" but doubly hard is the lot of that being, who, "poor for both worlds," can only find a resting-place for an emaciated and dying body on a pallet of rags or straw, on the floor of a cheerless, filthy room; with nothing in retrospect but a life of suffering and guilt, and nothing in *prospect* but a dark and hopeless future! It is when visiting such scenes as these, that the heart becomes ashamed to murmur, and fresh gratitude is kindled to God for the possession of so goodly an heritage. Some time since, while on our way to a Ragged School meeting, we made a hasty visit to a poor woman, who was dying from cancer in the breast. She felt fearful and anxious about the future, but not being able to read, and consequently very ignorant, her mind could lay hold of no sure ground of hope. For *seven weeks* she had lain, in much suffering, upon her lonely couch, *longing* for some one to come and instruct her, but no messenger of mercy had crossed her dwelling. It is when standing beside such death-beds, and contemplating the thousands around us who thus live and die, unpitied and unknown—whose broken hearts are unbound, and whose souls go down into the avenues of death without a guide, that our hearts become "stirred within us," when we think of the countless hours and opportunities that are frittered away by professing Christians, in idle calls, and concerts, and parties, which might and *ought* to be spent in imitating Him who came to "bind up the broken-hearted, proclaim liberty to the captive, and the opening of the prison doors to them that are bound." There is a happiness, a blessedness experienced in such acts of mercy, which they only know who perform them. Let the reader follow this Ragged School teacher through the courts and alleys, as he searches, almost in vain, for the home of his little boy—listen, then, to his touching narrative—and tell us if his prayers and labours do not return with a blessing into his own bosom:—

"I found him," says he, "in a dark corner of the room, meekly laying upon some tattered rags; his years could scarcely number ten. Oh, what a subject to depict the power of faith and vital godliness! The softest beams of resignation shone richly out from these bright lustrous eyes,

while the poor face was pinched and sallow, shrunk and drawn by pain. . . Turning to the mother, I remarked that the child seemed to be suffering much pain. 'Yes,' she replied, 'but he bears it with all the patience of an angel. No word of complaint ever escapes his lips. The only time he cries is when I cry; he weeps to see me weep. Then he entreats me fast to dry my tears, and tells me he will soon be gone "far, far away," where there will be no more sorrow, no more distress, no more pain; where we shall all meet together, and never part again; for Jesus will be there, and we shall be with him, happy for ever. And, dear mother, you are poor—you have parted with many things with the hope of making me better; the doctor will not come now, because you cannot pay him. When I am gone it will lessen your care; there will be more left for my brothers and sisters. You have been so good to me, pray do not weep, mother; I am going to rest.' Speaking to the precious child, I said, 'Do you not suffer much pain?' 'Yes, teacher,' he replied, 'sometimes very much; but it will soon be over.' 'Are you not afraid to die?' 'No, teacher; Jesus has died for sinners, such as I am.' 'But have you not been naughty and wicked before you were ill?' 'Yes, teacher, very often; but I have learnt at school that "the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin;" and "if we believe on the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved." I believe, teacher, that he died for me. To die, is to be with him, happy for ever.' In this consecrated state of mind he continued for a few days, and then breathed his soul, in perfect peace and resignation, into the arms of the Lord of righteousness. Previous, however, to his death, he called his father and mother to the corner of the room where he was lying, and from his ragged couch he thus pleaded with them: 'Father, I shall soon die, but before I go I want you to make me a promise. Father, I have often seen you come home drunk. Oh, this is very wicked! God cannot love you if you get drunk. Father, I have often heard you swear. I have heard the teachers read from the Bible that God is angry with those that swear. Oh, do, dear father, leave off, or we shall never meet in heaven!' Turning with much affection to his mother, he said, 'Mother, you never go to school or to church on a Sunday. Do go to school; they will tell you all about Jesus. Do go! Will you not promise me to go?' Who could resist such pleading? Three months have nearly passed. The mother has been regularly to a place of worship. She says of her husband, 'He has never used a bad word since, nor tasted a drain of drink since his dear boy's death.' Where may the fruits of this child's plea, applied by the grace of God, end? Shall we not say, 'Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings the Lord hath ordained praise!'"

Soon after his death the mother began to attend school, and one of the teachers of the mother's class says, that "one of these mothers was persuaded to come by her little boy previous to his death. Very often she says, with tears in her eyes, 'Oh that I were a Christian!' I have no doubt that these are the tears of penitence." To the above affecting narrative we only add, that they have not lived in vain who have paid such visits as these; nor are the institutions useless through which such results have been produced. They may be overlooked by the bustling world, and unappreciated by the busy multitude; but we believe, that of many a humble Ragged School it will yet be said, before an assembled universe, "*This and that one was born there;*" and to many a Ragged School teacher, "To them ye did it; it was done *to me.*"

A GLANCE AT THE BRIGHTON RAGGED SCHOOLS.

Among the provincial towns of our country, there is, perhaps, not one whose outward aspect presents so bright and pleasing a picture to the eye of a spectator as Brighton. The wide expanse of the blue and sparkling ocean—the purity and clearness of the atmosphere—the long range of white palatial structures, here and there broken into picturesque forms by buildings of a more ancient date and humbler character, which compose its sea-front—the airy, fanciful beauty of its domed and minaretted Pavilion, set like an orient gem in the very centre and heart of the town; the general out-door habits of its population—all combine to impart to Brighton an appearance of unusual cheerfulness, opulence, and content. Viewed on a summer's evening from the head of the pier, when the arisen moon is plating the small crisp waves of a full tide with a glittering effulgence, to which that of silver, gold, or any other metal, conveys but a faint analogy; and the newly-kindled lamps, extending in an unbroken line of radiance from Kemp Town to Adelaide Crescent, give to the town almost the appearance of being illuminated for some festive occasion—it presents a scene of really fairy-like beauty. Nor less attractive is the picture when the white buildings gleam, and the blue waters foam and sparkle, in the sunlight sheen of a brilliant summer's day.

The interior condition and life of the town are not unworthy of its outward features. The duties of religious observance are heedfully regarded; the Sabbath is admirably kept; the numerous churches and chapels of the Establishment, and other erections for public worship, most of which have been reared through the voluntary subscriptions of Christian munificence, are on that day crowded by devout and attentive throngs; ministering to whom stand men who display, in union, an amount of pulpit eloquence of such rare and transcendent quality, as is positively startling to meet with in combination in one place. Nowhere can the objects and institutions of Christian benevolence be more earnestly pursued, or more liberally supported. From the noble County Hospital and sea-bathing Infirmary, to the smallest private society for the relief of the sick and necessitous, there is not one which the generous heart and open hand are not found zealously employed to advocate, or eagerly extended to befriend.

Yet, alas! even here, much, very much, of want, misery, and evil, are to be found; much which calls upon the followers of the great exemplar to be up and labouring in their Master's cause, and with all their energies seeking to do His work, "while it is yet called to-day." Difficult, indeed, it may be, while gazing upon the brilliant exterior of the beautiful town, to realize to the mind the idea that "so lovely a thing is the mansion of sin," or to associate with its singularly bright and cleanly aspect, the notions of filth, wickedness, and squalor; yet the humane parochial officers and medical attendants of the poor, the devoted and indefatigable district visitor, and above all, the admirable body of clergy with whom Brighton is so singularly favoured, can attest that a fearfully large amount of those direful ills do exist within its precincts. The north-eastern part of the town has long been notoriously beneath their influence; branching out from streets which lie at the back of and parallel with the brilliant Marine Parade, are a number of other long, narrow streets, whose small and crowded tenements, overflowing with human swarms, are the homes of penury and disease; and, alas! that it must be added, in too many instances, the haunts of vice in its worst and most degraded forms. Here, in these streets, are situated the tramps' lodging-houses, visited, we believe, by Lord Ashley during one of his Lordship's occasional sojourns at Brighton, and where all the evils infesting similar places in London were found to

exist in appalling strength and severity. Here, also, in this neighbourhood, is the favourite house of resort for the beggars and tramps; where they may be seen of a morning in the merry assemblage, devouring their abundant breakfasts of broiled ham, rump steaks, and other substantial comestibles; and relating, with much glee, in the slang language of their profession, their exploits and successful impositions of the previous day, before sallying forth anew in quest of similar adventures. It is fair to state, that much of this is *imported* vagrancy. The humane provisions of the "Local Act" render Brighton an elected place of succour to the wandering and destitute; and during the late severe trials of the sister kingdom, the town came in for its full share of Irish mendicancy, poverty, and pain. Indeed, with the exception of the metropolis, and the great towns of the north, perhaps no spot in England experienced so large an inundation of those piteous ills. Of course, all these wandering tribes bring their families with them; and it will be manifest from this, and what has been previously recited, that in few places can the need of Ragged Schools, with all their ameliorating and beneficial tendencies, have been more felt than in Brighton. Infinite credit is, therefore, due to those benevolent and far-sighted persons, who first established in the town the "Nottingham Street Ragged Schools," situated in the very centre of what we have described as the worst and most demoralized districts. The original formation of the schools is, indeed, chiefly due to a single individual, whose name, as well as the interesting circumstances attending that formation, we are forbidden to disclose. Enough to state, for the example and encouragement of others, that to the efforts—the almost unconsciously-directed efforts—of one earnest-minded Christian, is to be attributed, under the providence of God, the establishment of Ragged Schools in the town of Brighton.

The Nottingham Street Schools were first formally opened in January, 1847; and year by year since that period have continued steadily to advance in prosperity and usefulness. In 1848 there were on the school books the names of 168 scholars; 80 boys, and 88 girls and infants. In 1849, the number had increased to 92 boys, and 112 girls and infants. While at the commencement of the present year the whole number of children on the books amounted to 247; and, to quote the extremely sensible and well drawn up Report for 1850, "Let it be remembered, these are not drawn from other schools; on the contrary; during the last year, the National, and British and Foreign Schools have increased in the number of their scholars; so that, at least, the greater number of the 247 may be considered as receiving the benefit of Christian instruction, which would have been lost to them, unless thus furnished near to their own dwellings, and adapted to their peculiar habits." And besides these, between thirty and forty adult men and lads receive instruction in reading, writing, and arithmetic, two evenings in the week.

Of course this rapid increase of numbers necessitated increased accommodation; accordingly, a new, airy, and convenient school-room *for boys only*, has been erected at the end of Egremont Street, adjoining Nottingham Street, and was opened for instruction in November last—*the whole expense having been defrayed by a noble and generous supporter of these institutions.* This new accommodation for the boys made room for the girls and infants, who at present divide between them the two old rooms in Nottingham Street; but these being very confined and out of repair, the Committee, looking at the signs of progress, and in "the trust that God's blessing is resting upon the work," arranged to build some new rooms also for the girls and infants. Their appeal for assistance in this project was most promptly and liberally responded to. An excellent site

adjoining the new boys' school was purchased for the sum of £85; and in order to enable the Committee to meet this expense, a lady, who is one of their number, advanced the sum of £100 at interest during her lifetime, and after her decease to become the property of the institution. Another lady, also a member of the Committee, commenced the subscription by a donation of £50; the same generous spirit was manifested in various other quarters, and at the period we write the building is in a forward state of completion. It is to be capable of containing 100 infants on the ground-floor, and 100 girls in the corresponding room above; a small yard to be annexed for the use of each of them.

The gradual improvement in the behaviour and appearance of the children, and their progress in intelligence and religious and general information, has been most satisfactory and encouraging. At first it was found very difficult to make them come on the Lord's-day; now this difficulty has entirely disappeared, and on that day the larger number of the two hundred and forty-seven attend Divine service in All Souls' Church; the perpetual curate of which, the Rev. R. S. Smith, is the visiting clergyman of the schools, and their zealous and indefatigable friend. The following extract from a letter addressed to this gentleman by a London City Missionary, of large experience in the state of the poor population at the east of the metropolis, affords gratifying testimony to the improved appearance of the scholars, as well as to their growth in religious and useful knowledge, and habits of good order and application:—

"It gives me great pleasure to bear my humble testimony to the progress made by the dear children in your Free Schools, collected as they are from the lowest families located in the neighbourhood. When we consider the increase of juvenile depravity, and the wandering disposition of youth, we can do no other than rejoice in the improving habits of the scholars. In my visits to them during the past week, their appearance impressed me much, and I could not forbear hoping that there was an improvement in the habits of their parents at home. How different to their appearance last year! This year a mother's care was seen about many of them in their clean attire. The vacant stare is exchanged for that intelligent expression, so visible on their countenances. Their great improvement in reading the Word of God, and their advance in that knowledge which makes wise unto salvation, through faith in Jesus Christ, are also manifest. I look upon your schools as a valuable nursery for the church of the living God, from which, I trust, will be gathered a rich harvest of precious souls."

The liberal support which these schools have received since their first formation is most creditable to the town of Brighton, and illustrates what we have said of the general disposition observable in regard to objects of charity. In 1848, the annual income was £88. 16*s*. 2*d*.; in 1849, £106. 16*s*. 6*d*.; the accounts for the current year are not yet published. If this slight sketch of what one provincial town in the empire has been able to effect on behalf of Ragged Schools shall be at all instrumental in stimulating the residents of other towns to similar exertions, it will not have been written in vain.

There are other Ragged Schools in Brighton, situated in the vicinity of Dorset Gardens, and, doubtless, effecting good in their sphere, as all such establishments *must;* but with the details of these latter we have not had an opportunity of becoming conversant.

M. E. J. S.

THE ARAB OF THE CITY,

BEING THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A LONDON THIEF.

CHAPTER VI.

TEARING-UP; OR, LIFE IN THE LONDON UNIONS.

THE modes of subsistence adopted and pursued by the lawless and the dissolute, form a painfully instructive chapter in the history of human experience, and reveal, in frightful colouring, the voluntary degradation and gratuitous misery which sinners cling to in their guilty career. Where unprincipled youth breaks away from all kindly control, and becomes abhorrent of continuous toil or virtuous industry, it is to eke out a precarious existence by questionable expedients, and learn systematically to prey upon society. A vagrant life at the best is fortuitous, and its evil love of adventure is alike pleased and supported by cozening public charity, and maintaining a mean and malignant warfare with all the world, in order to extort a pitiful and precarious dole for its subsistence.

It is a serious question with every enlightened patriot of the present age, how far our system of poor laws has created and fostered the pauperism which it was intended to suppress. Undoubtedly, from vicious legislation or defective administration, the funds which were raised for the relief of destitution were diverted largely by guilty ingenuity into the rankest growth of crime. The casual wards of the workhouse, as they were formerly used, were nothing else than hotbeds for the luxuriant production of all villany; and while the system has been wisely changed, since the scenes of the following narrative were realized, yet the systematic and wholesale plunder of public property for the worst of purposes, which is here depicted, may serve to show the extreme caution and wise discrimination with which public charity should be conducted, lest in suppressing one evil we should rear a worse in its room, and society should offer itself a sacrifice on the altar of misguided benevolence. It is only necessary to premise that Spivens' Gang, to which our Arab belonged, had largely distributed themselves for years among the London Unions, for regular night-quarters and partial provision; and to render the system still more profitable, they were in the habit of entering clad in the scantiest rags, which they tore to pieces overnight, so as to secure themselves in a better suit in the morning. This was called "tearing-up," and proved to be a regular means of subsistence, as the following narrative will show:—

As I have said that we were about one hundred or so in number, there was no place that we could lodge altogether. We were, therefore, forced to separate ourselves in numbers, from twenty to thirty at a place; and as many of the places that we went to would admit us only for one night, we used to have recourse to very strange methods, in order to deceive porters at the unions or workhouses. About this time I went, in company with others, into "West Street," that is, WEST LONDON Union; and on obtaining entrance, we had about six ounces of bread given to each of us, and we went into a square room, where there were slanting boards for us to sleep on. One rug would have to cover five or six of us. We in general lay naked, so that we should keep ourselves from vermin. There was a window about six feet square, but not a pane of glass was in it, for as often as they replaced them, as often we would break them; they therefore resolved to put no more in. I have known nearly thirty chaps in there on a Sunday; they have refused to go out, and have been kept in all day without a morsel of food; that was the cause of the window-breaking, etc. The noise we kicked up is indescribable; we used to sing many obscene songs, which were the composition of the gang, and which, for profaneness and obscenity, must bear no comparison with any I ever yet heard. Here I tore my clothes up, and six others; and they actually kept us in here four-

teen days in a state of nudity, with bread and gruel for our fare, and two rugs to cover seven of us; no window-glass in, and exposed to the wind and cold of the day and nights. They then gave us the oldest clothes that they could find, and a two-pound loaf each. This union house has been a most notorious place; the old porter, Mr. Stanton, was a good old soul; we used to "plum" him up, but they were mostly afraid of us, and many a chap has been imprisoned from this union. I got ten days, and another one of us seven days at one time, for threatening to put the "bash" in; that is, to break the door or window, and obtain admittance. But I should think that no other union has had so many casual for so long a period, with the exception of Peckham. KENSINGTON could accommodate more, with better food and lodgings. The porter here would keep us waiting till nearly nine or ten o'clock at night. On admission, we got four ounces of bread and a pint of soup or broth, with straw beds, and a rug to cover every two or three chaps. Here we had a "dodge;" we would "nail" the navies' boots, etc., and pass them through the window into the road, where our "pals" would receive them. Then in the morning, when there would be a "row" about them, the boots we used to call "crabs," the police would search, but no trace of them could be found. We would even take the new rugs out, bound round our bodies; they would "pawn" for two shillings. One of our chaps was found out with one, and he got a month for it. We here had the unpleasant task of breaking stones for our food, etc.; but we would break the handles of the hammers, so they did not profit much by us, as we would spoil as much in one hour as we could earn in a month. But a great many of us would not work, so they would send us to jail for a month each time. A great many have also torn up here, but with no success, as they have all been sent to prison for it generally for a month. At this place we used to get in when we could not find admission anywhere else, at two or three o'clock. We used in the summer time to refresh ourselves with a bathe in the Serpentine of an evening and in the morning; this was a luxury to us, which we used gladly to make use of; it was our greatest pleasure, and it used to make us both clean and healthy. The typhus fever used to be very bad in the casual ward here, and our respected "captain," Taglioni, died here from the effects of cold and fever. The old porter here was a discharged turnkey of the Coldbath Fields Prison; and while we were waiting for admittance, any one of our gang that would say that he had just come out of prison he would instantly let in. He was always very partial to persons that had been in prison. But after he left, a short hump-backed man was the porter, whom we used to call "Lord Humph," to his great mortification, and whom we used to jeer and shove about anyhow. Our next place of resort used to be LAMBETH Union; here we used to go in small and large gangs. We had once to get "orders" from the overseers before we could get in; but they were so pestered by our many visits to their shops, etc., for orders, that after a year or so they were not required. The porter could admit us in, although we were not allowed to go more than once, yet we used to change our clothes, etc., and change our names, so that we have got in from fifty to two hundred times in each year. On our entrance, we were questioned as to our age, name, and profession, which they inserted in a book, kept for that purpose, and we went then to the casual ward, which I should think was about fifteen feet square. The beds were placed on the floor, with old torn rugs to cover us. I have known eighty persons crowded together in that small space; each got four ounces of bread and one ounce of cheese at night, with the same in the morning. The stench arising from the many breaths has been nearly suffocating; there was no water to wash with, and indeed no washing utensils were ever provided in any of the unions; if there had been we would have gladly availed ourselves of the opportunity; and the bedding and rugs used to be dreadfully full of vermin, so we used to lie naked. This was our usual mode of lying in the four years we went backwards and forwards. I do not think that ever the beds or bedding were washed. At last we used to find it very difficult to get in, and therefore tried a new "dodge." Perhaps a score of us would each provide himself with a large stone, or half brick-bat, and then, on a signal, "bang, bang," would go the missiles against the door and windows; then the police would be sent for, but not one of us would "split." Then the police would take us to the station-house in the High Street; but the inspector would not know what to do with twenty or thirty of us. We would tell

him a long "yarn," and then he always ordered us back to the union, where we would get taken in. Thus we were feared by the parish authorities; they would give us bread and cheese for us to go away somewhere else; so we got bolder each day, till it was of very frequent occurrence to put the "bash" in, four or five times in a month. Then they put wire all over the windows and the lamps, and they stationed some old paupers to prevent these daring outrages; but we used to pelt them, so that they were glad to go in. As they could not keep us away from them, and as there was no work for us to do, this place became a regular lounge for us, for in the daytime we could get bread if we asked for it. One day we found a baker's truck standing near the workhouse, and we immediately emptied it of its contents, consisting of about thirty-five quartern loaves. About this time thirteen chaps "tore-up" in this union; in the morning they were found naked; the porter stared at them, and he fetched the governor, Mr. Evans, who decided on sending them before a magistrate, which he did. The magistrate asked whose clothes they had torn? The chaps replied, "Their own;" "Then," said the magistrate, "I cannot do anything to them for destroying their own property." So they were discharged. This was a great decision, as we thought, in our favour; but all magistrates in London did not think the same; but it encouraged that habit amongst us, as the excuse we made generally was that our clothes were full of vermin.

PECKHAM (Marlborough House, belonging to the City of London Union) was another of our favourite rendezvous. Here we would meet in our whole strength, one hundred or one hundred and fifty, and "kick up a dust." Although this place was a distance of four miles from the place where we used to get our "tickets," still the walk was not an impediment in our road, as the shopkeepers in the way can verify. They used to keep a respectable eye on our movements thither, as we never let half a chance escape us, if possible, of putting ourselves in possession of anything that could be purloined; such were our propensities for stealing. Peckham could accommodate nearly seven hundred "casuals." Five ounces of bread on entering, and after an hour's work in the stone-yard, which was never palatable, we used to receive our breakfast. But the beds are worthy of mention. The mattresses were placed in a row, side by side, on the floor, and then about twelve rugs sewn together that would reach from one end to the other. They would cover between fifty and sixty chaps. There were in one large room four of such monster beds, and only a small window, about two and a half feet by two feet, for any air to come in or out to us. The stench was awful, especially in the summer months; and sometimes that small window would be shut up in the middle of the night, by those who slept near or close against it. Then I have known nearly half the persons smoking at a time in there of an evening. There was no washing water or soap for any of us. This union has had a very few "tearers-up," because they used to furnish all ragged persons with clothes, and you may well suppose that we had our share of them. I have known three and four suits of clothes got by one chap in the course of the month; and I think in two years, that our gang alone could not have had less than four or five hundred suits of clothes from them. I should suppose each suit to cost about 8*s.* 6*d.*; namely, slop 2*s.* 6*d.*, shoes 3*s.* 6*d.*, stockings, say 6*d.*, shirt 1*s.*, trowsers 1*s.* This price is under, perhaps, the actual cost of each article named; they would cost, say five hundred suits, about £230; besides victuals, etc. Each person receiving clothes was generally supposed to work from one week to a month for them; but the average time was about ten or fifteen days each; so what an amount we, as a gang, must have cost them! Then we would take it into our heads, and get passed either to Ireland or Scotland. I have been passed twice to Scotland by the union, and I know several that have been passed to Ireland. This place was a great harbour for us, and the depredations we have committed in and about the vicinity are perhaps beyond belief; and I believe this place is still open to vagrants.

ST. GEORGE'S WORKHOUSE (in the Borough) we used to call our "Old House at Home," by which title we all knew what it meant. This place was our rendezvous for a period of nearly two years, through which time fifty and eighty of us would assemble nightly. It was notorious for our noise, "rows," and "battles." We as a class were so well-known to them, that they had not the trouble to question us; six ounces of bread were given to us on our entering; our beds were placed on the

floor, and one rug was allowed to each bed; but we had a "dodge" with the rugs; as there was no person having authority in the casual ward, we used to "plant" the rugs, and after supplying our gang with them gratis, we would charge the navies or others a half-penny or penny each for the loan of one for the night. Then we could sell our "tokes" (lump of bread) for a penny. Here, as I mentioned before, we had our "larks," (games,) and sometimes we would form a ring, and "sparring" would commence, and some of the gang would "set-too," to our infinite delight and amusement. Then, after retiring to rest, a few songs would be sung, and we would all join in the chorus, so that we used to make a most deafening noise; some nights we would tell tales, and histories of our doings, and fairy tales of the most absurd and disgusting, and not unfrequently obscene kind. As it was a large room, nearly forty feet long, and nearly half the width, we could play at "soldiers," "fly the garter," and other fashionable and diverting amusements, as we no doubt thought them. There was no water provided for our use for washing; the room was well ventilated, and at night the gas lamp outside the windows showed plenty of light. This in our estimation was a great desideratum, as we could fight, etc., at all hours of the night. On one Whitsuntide a party of us had been at Greenwich fair; we had been there all the day, and what with scrambling for money in the mud-pond in Greenwich park, and running after oranges, etc., we were pretty tired. We returned to London, and arriving at this place about one o'clock, we knocked the porter up; to his great surprise, he found it was his old friends returned. As we had left in the morning preceding, he for a long time refused us, but finding we were not willing to let him sleep, he came round and let us in. He fastened the doors, and I think could be just got into bed again, when he had to come to us again, along with two policemen, for this cause: as soon as he had let us in, we found our old enemies the navies snoring away in our beds, (as we called them;) we immediately began pulling them out of the beds, whereupon a desperate row commenced; in a few minutes the navies, only half awake, wondered what the matter was, and they began pitching into us, right and left; their boots and ours began to fly about in all directions; and what with their and our hallooing, the police and porter had been forced to come round and quell the disturbance. We, as soon as we heard the unlocking of the door, laid down, and pretended to be all asleep, and on their entrance they found us quiet, but the poor navies were accused of our doings, and two or three of them being rather violent in their manner, were thrust out into the street. We of course accused the navies, and the police believing us, went out and locked the door. This is only one of a great number of instances of our cruelty towards the navies. I have known five and six such rows in different unions in London in the course of a month. The tearers-up in this place did not find it very easy after the first two or three times, as, on our entrance, we had to give our clothes up, as the property of the guardians, and they did even go so far as to make us pull off some of our clothes, and put them into the assistant overseer's hands. But they soon got sick of this game; it was too much trouble for them. Each tearer-up was furnished with a canvass suit, very coarse, and then taken before a magistrate, and committed either for seven or fourteen days to Brixton jail; but after they found that this plan was not sufficient to deter us, they hit upon the plan of "chaunting" (marking) them, with such words as "Stop it," "St. George's Workhouse." These marks were placed on the most conspicuous part of the dress. I have known nearly thirty stamps on the frock and trowsers; but even this, with imprisonment, and all, could not prevent the "tearing-up" system. BERMONDSEY Workhouse was another of our "Homes," and of course well attended by us. They used only to admit six or eight casual paupers in of a night, but on our making our formidable appearance, they soon were glad to accommodate us. They were very particular at one time in searching our persons, to see whether we had any tobacco, pipes, or candles; all these articles were strictly prohibited, but we used to "stall" them in in a rather novel way. The candles were for our own special use in the night, in case of rows, etc.; and to get them in, we would tie them round our legs inside the legs of the trowsers, and up our backs between the jacket or coat, or coat and the waistcoat, so they had no notion of their being "planted" there; but if they found any one out with the candle in his possession, then they were foiled in their object, as perhaps several had each a candle, and they would never suspect that any one else had any more about them.

Our beds were loose straw, and a few pieces of torn filthy rugs, to cover some eighty persons that were there crowded together, in a place about twenty feet long by about fifteen feet wide. There was no window that gave light, only one from a room, and when the doors were fastened, not a breath of air could either come in to us, or the foul air escape, except from the doors when opened. Here the typhus fever was continually raging, and I have known four or five poor creatures lying huddled together for a week at a time, unable to crawl, through the effects of the fever; and when they were found in an almost dying state, then, and not till then, would they be taken into the house infirmary. By this manner one of our companions, Captain Grant, died—not captain of the gang, but by singing his favourite song of that notorious highwayman, Captain Grant, he acquired this title. This place was also noted for the desperate attacks we made on the building—doors, windows—as we would nearly batter the door in, and several times all the front windows of the house have been broken by us. The police have been of little service in preventing these attacks by us. Then the "tearing-up" was carried on here with great activity; and first they kept the offenders in the casual ward naked for a week or ten days, and then clothed them; but this did not lessen the offence; then they would send the offenders immediately to the magistrate, and each person got fourteen days for it that did not lessen it: then they clothed the "chaps" with coarse sacking slop and trowsers, marked all over with "Bermondsey Workhouse," "Stop it," and "Lent." This, I think, was the wisest of the three preceding courses, as the "tearers" soon forsook it; but on the dispersion of the gang, this workhouse refused to admit so many casuals, consequently it gradually became less in our estimation.

"Tearing-up" had now become general with the majority of the gang, and with a view to see what could be done, seventeen of us resolved to visit WANDSWORTH UNION, six miles from London. This place had never been visited by us with that view; so that away we went from "Dirty Dick's," after being wished "luck" in our expedition, and with all our best clothes left at our friend's above-named, we must have presented a most grotesque appearance. The worst old rags that we could procure we were dressed in; some with no shoes or stockings, others with neither cap nor hat; some in tattered knee breeches, and some with no coat, or waistcoat, only in an old shirt and trowsers. Thus we were attired; such a number, too, no wonder the people stared at us, and wondered where we came from, or were going to. We laughed and sung all the way till we got in sight of the union. Now we thought that our best plan would be to go to the gate by couples, because they might have suspicions that we were after no good; so we divided ourselves into couples, and as soon as one couple got admittance, then another couple made their appearance at the gate, and so on with the rest. But after the third lot got admittance, the porter thought it was passing strange that he should have so many guests, inquired the reason, but each of us denied all knowledge of the other, and we said that we met each other just at the gate, so he could get no news from us. We were admitted, and sent into the mill-room, where from six o'clock till ten at night did we work hard, turning a flour-mill; but after so long working we refused to do any more until we had some food; but that was refused us, and the master threatened to send for a body of police; but of course that did not frighten us, and at last we were ordered into the fore-court of the union, and two or three paupers went down to the station-house to fetch the police; but a policeman made his appearance, and we volunteered to go with him to the station, which we did, and he took us, seventeen in number, down to the town of Wandsworth, near a mile; when we met a dozen or more of police coming to fetch us, they heartily laughed on seeing us with one policeman. We were examined and locked up for the night, and a dreadful night we had of it, being nearly naked, with a bitter cold night, and in a damp, cold, stone cell, we were nearly perished; no food was given to us till the next morning, when we had each six ounces of bread and one and half ounce of cheese; we were all taken to the Court House, and Mr. Paynter, the magistrate, asked the reason of our refusal to work at the mill; we all told him the time we had worked, but the governor told the magistrate that we could have done the work allotted to us in less than half an hour. We were admonished by the magistrate, and discharged; so we were completely foiled in our long-anticipated expedition; our visions of good clothes and the money they would fetch when sold having thus all vanished.

Then we thought that GREENWICH UNION might afford us a rich reward for our endeavours, so fourteen of us took a trip there one afternoon about this period. On our entrance we were questioned, and bread was given to us, and at night the whole of us "tore-up;" not a piece of our clothes three inches square could be found whole in the morning. The master was much surprised by our conduct; but on our representing to him the state of our clothes, which we said were covered with vermin, he consulted with the overseers, and after a while, to our horror and amazement, we found that we were to be dressed out in some of the old pensioners' clothes. One or two had old marine coats, and perhaps other kind of trowsers; some of us had old artillery coats, and three had old huzzar suits. Such a spectacle we presented, that I have no doubt we were taken for poor invalided recruits. Now we had to come to Dirty Dick's to change them, and the hooting we had coming into London was enormous. Some boys pelted us with stones, others bawled out after us, "There goes the awkward squad," and then another would say, there go the "Royal Runaways." The jeering and laughing we had to put up with were dreadful. At last we reached "Dirty Dick's" once more; but we were now getting used to our new clothes, and then we got broomsticks, etc., and we marched up and down Smithfield pens, so that a great crowd soon gathered about us, wondering what we were, and we thought that we would, with the help of the rest of the gang, proceed to the Compter, and kick up a row there, for the liberation of our worthy host, "Dirty Dick," who was incarcerated that day for non-payment of a fine of £5, for allowing disturbances caused by us in his house. This fine he at first refused to pay, but afterwards he yielded, and came out as we were going to "kick up this said row."

ALDERSGATE STREET WORKHOUSE is worthy of remark on account of eleven of us "tearing-up" there; but the master, who was a very severe man, sent us in two cabs (each had only a rug to cover him) to Guildhall, when Alderman ——— ordered the windows to be opened, for the stench arising from the rugs was unbearable, and he severely reprimanded the master for sending us there in such an indecent and disgusting manner. However, we each got a month; each person on coming out was dressed in the convict's clothes; even the caps we had were taken away, and striped convict's caps given to us. This was a dreadful blow to us for all our trouble. The people and police imagined we were discharged convicts; but Petticoat Lane had the clothes the same day, and the money was spent at Dirty Dick's. But tearing-up was now getting on the decline, and Mile End Workhouse put a still greater damper on us. Four visited it with that purpose, and after effecting their object, the master here, having heard of the audacious character of the gang, resolved to trick them, which he did in this way: the rags were ordered to be sewn up again, and what patches they could not make fit, then, red, blue, green, white calico, all colours were sewn on to make up the suits again. They succeeded in doing it, and the men were turned out in these ludicrous clothes, regular harlequin dresses; they that wore them were ashamed of themselves, and the gang resolved not to try that place again. I may here say that Mile End Workhouse, Poplar, Stratford, St. George's in the East, Spitalfields, Bethnal Green, Shoreditch, Whitechapel, Stepney, West Ham, and Holborn Unions and Workhouses, have all been visited by us; but their accommodation was so small for our requirements that we seldom came in large numbers to them. CHRISTCHURCH WORKHOUSE, at the New Cut, Lambeth, was not our usual haunt for the night, because of the difficulty in getting in; they would supply us with any quantity of bread, rather than take us in for the night; so that this place was frequented by many with the view of getting the bread, which was about four to six ounces in each lot. This game continued for two or nearly three years, during which time it was in the habit of supplying near one hundred of an evening with the aforesaid allowance; but those few who could be so fortunate as to obtain admission found a superior accommodation. Each man had a separate box, and all very clean; in the morning, after a little pump work, a good breakfast was served to the casuals, and then they were discharged; but not admitted a second time if known. This ought to have been the case with all the unions, and not half the vagrants could have been about London. Yet a few did manage to tear-up at different times here. Once, myself with another got in, and in the early part of the morning tore our rags up, our others being left at "Dirty Dick's;" so when the wardsman found out that we had "tore-

up," he fetched the porter, who swore at us in right earnest, said he would sicken us for it, and away he went, leaving us in considerable doubt what course he would pursue. After we had our breakfast, my comrade was called out, and the door immediately shut; then such a laughing I heard; hurrah, hurrah, and such noises, that I began to feel anything but comfortable; and in a few minutes I was called out, when I beheld the men's ward, a very long room, and near two hundred or more persons there, all laughing, some standing on the tables, looking towards me, and me entirely naked before men, women, and boys. I confess I was completely startled; but the porter, who was a large-built man, twisted me round, and put a slop over my head, and I slipped on a pair of canvass trowsers, both completely covered with 'Stop it," and "Lent," as thick as they could be placed on the canvass; this they thought was a new dodge; but I had seen the same kind six months before, but it was new to them; then the boys, men, and women, all began to laugh again, and I was shoved about till I got outside the door into the street, when I made the best of my way to "Dirty Dick's," and sold the "chaunted togs." We could get the marks out by squeezing lemons on the marks, and I believe we were about the last that tried the tearing-up here. NEWINGTON WORKHOUSE was a great place for the "dodge," and I believe more have "torn-up" here than at any other place, for this reason:— 1st. They did not send the "coves" to jail; 2nd. They gave them shirts, and decent clothes; and 3rd. That they did not "chaunt" them so badly. This place could accommodate in two casual wards about one hundred, or a hundred and twenty; it was much resorted to by us; but there was no work, which was an object not to be sneered at, as we did not like to work for that which we contended was our right, viz., relief. Then we had, as a last place of refuge, where we could all go, (the whole of the gang,) ST. OLAVE'S, near Bermondsey. This place has been one of the worst places in casual notoriety; the different daring offences committed at it would themselves fill a volume. The casual ward was a damp cellar under ground, about eight or ten steps; here a lot of loose straw was strewn over the boards, which were of oak, and full of holes, about the size of a crown piece. I cannot say what was the object for having such a flooring, but I know that the damp used to come from the soil beneath, and the wet on us in the morning would scarce be credited. We were covered by a kind of a sail, which would cover nearly the whole of the inmates; but in course of time this sail began to dwindle away in size, by being cut up for making us trowsers, etc., that at last not a vestige could be found, though at one time it was about twenty-five feet long and ten wide. Six ounces of bread were allotted to us for our supper, and the same for our breakfast. There was no work for us to do, and no water was allowed us, either to drink or wash with. This place had been open to us nearly three years, and the scenes that I have beheld there would hardly be believed. Once, on our waiting for the overseer to take our names down, a few of us observed that there was no one in the overseer's office; we resolved to get in if we could; but there being no door to go in at, but a small window eighteen inches square, where the overseers used to ask us questions, two of our gang got in, looked all around in the hopes of finding some money, but finding none, they handed out seventeen quarterns of bread to the rest, numbering about thirty individuals. This we "planted" round us, and where we best could; this job we got over very well; but some stranger informed of two of our chaps, for which they got fourteen days each only; but we had several "goes" into the overseer's room, but our search for money was always unsuccessful. Then the next great "blow up" we had was this:— We were very cold, and I think wet, and we lit some straw to warm us by; but as misfortune always attended us, the smoke issued forth from the windows, door, etc., and outside a cry of fire was raised: we, on hearing this, began to feel alarmed; all began to put the fire out, though all was safe and right; by and by the police came down to us, five or six in number, and two firemen came also, and searched about, shoving and pushing us about; then they began sloushing and swamping the place with pails of water; then the police asked us who set the straw on fire, but receiving from us no answers, only "ax about," "he did it," and such terms as those, they tried to pull off this sail from us, but we as resolutely pulled against them, till they were so mad with passion that the police used their truncheons so unmercifully about our legs and heads that we were forced to give in, and then, as they were going, we gave them a volley of old boots and shoes, etc.; then we blockaded the

door against them, so that they could not get in to us without using a deal of force, which it seems they did not care to trouble themselves with; but not long after this we set the straw on fire again, and even tore up some of the oak flooring, and had a rousing fire, as we had a fire-place in the cellar, for such it was, and always got clear off without any punishment; but punishment could not deter us then from any acts that we did, because, in the first place, we were not afraid of a prison, and in the next place we would not let it be seen that we were afraid of hazarding our liberty for anything that might seem to us to be a "lark," or serving the Union out, or "whacking" the overseers; these were things that we took special delight in. To show how far we did go, I will mention a case that happened in Seething Lane, in the City. The overseer, Mr. Topps, used to give us "orders" for "Peckham," but he would sometimes keep us there from four to five hours, waiting for them. At this time near 200 or 240 were congregated in front of his house in Seething Lane, when we began to get impatient, waiting so long a time. We began to drill like soldiers, then marching up and down the lane, we increased in numbers, till at last nearly the whole of those who had congregated were with us; then we marched up Mark Lane four abreast, round and round again, till the shopkeepers and housekeepers were getting afraid of us. As is usual with vagrants many had walking-sticks, and those that had marched in front. With a ragged noisy set of vagabonds like us it was no wonder they were afraid, and we were singing, and hallooing, till a whole body of police made their disagreeable appearance, and with their bludgeons, they pursued after us a long way; several were knocked down, and several were unable to walk after it. Eight of us were "nailed," and half of them got one month, and the other four got two months each. I have refrained all through from giving the names of parties implicated in any of the sad incidents of this narrative; but I have done so, not knowing into whose hands this account might fall, as I should be sorry to wound the feelings of any parent or relative, whose son or relative's name might here be named.

I have now mentioned the places where we used to assemble in great numbers, to the great annoyance of the neighbourhoods where the unions were situated. But the following are the names of the other minor places we were in the habit of visiting:—Hammersmith, St. Giles, St. Martin's in the Fields, Strand Union, Islington Workhouse, Hackney Union, St. Luke's, Paddington Houseless Poor Refuge; this last-named place was, in my opinion, the best regulated asylum in London; here each had to obtain a ticket from a subscriber, and on admission half a pound of bread and a pint of warm broth for supper; a clean bed, and half a pound of bread and warm milk in the morning; then all could wash night and morning, and a poor "chap" could wash his shirt. This was the only place that afforded us such a comfort; this asylum I believe is now open to casuals. There was no swearing, singing, or obscene discourse carried on here by us; but I can say, that where civility and kind usage in any little thing were shown towards us, we always took notice of it, and we would remember it for a long time; but wherever we went we were scowled at, swore and abused at, till every spark of respect and civility had left us.

LINES WRITTEN BY A PRISONER ON NEWGATE WALL.

THOU hapless wretch, whom justice calls
To breathe within those dreary walls;
KNOW, wretched man, this very cell
May be to thee the porch to hell;
Thy sins confessed—by God forgiven:
Mysterious change! it leads to heaven.

Poetry.

THE BEGGAR'S PRAYER.

(Written by a girl, (formerly a beggar,) of the Dundee Industrial School.)

Jesus, who madst the meanest soul
An object of thy care,
Attend to what my heart would speak,
And hear a beggar's prayer.

For thou, when bleeding on the cross,
My sins and griefs didst bear;
Therefore, my Lord, thou'lt not refuse
To hear a beggar's prayer.

I was a helpless beggar girl,
That wandered in the street,
When good men took me to the school,
Where I got clothes and meat. (food.)

And yet the lot which seemed so hard,
God's faithfulness did prove;
For I was carried there to hear
And learn of Jesus' love.

Poor and despised though I was,
Thine arm, O God! was nigh;
And when thy mercy first I knew,
Sure, none so glad as I.

In ign'rance long my soul had dwelt,
A rebel bold I'd been;
But thy great mercy, O my God!
Saved me from all my sin.

Mine was a wretched state, exposed
To men and angel's view;
A slave to vice, a slave to sin,
A slave to Satan too.

But if thy Son hath made me free,
Then am I free indeed;
From powers of darkness, sin, and hell,
Thy love my soul has freed.

Oh, that my friends, and sister dear,
Might thy great mercy see,
And learn what Christ has done for them,
What he has done for me.

Lord, send thy Word to their dark hearts,
Where nought but sin doth live;
Show them the way, the truth, the life
Which thou alone canst give.

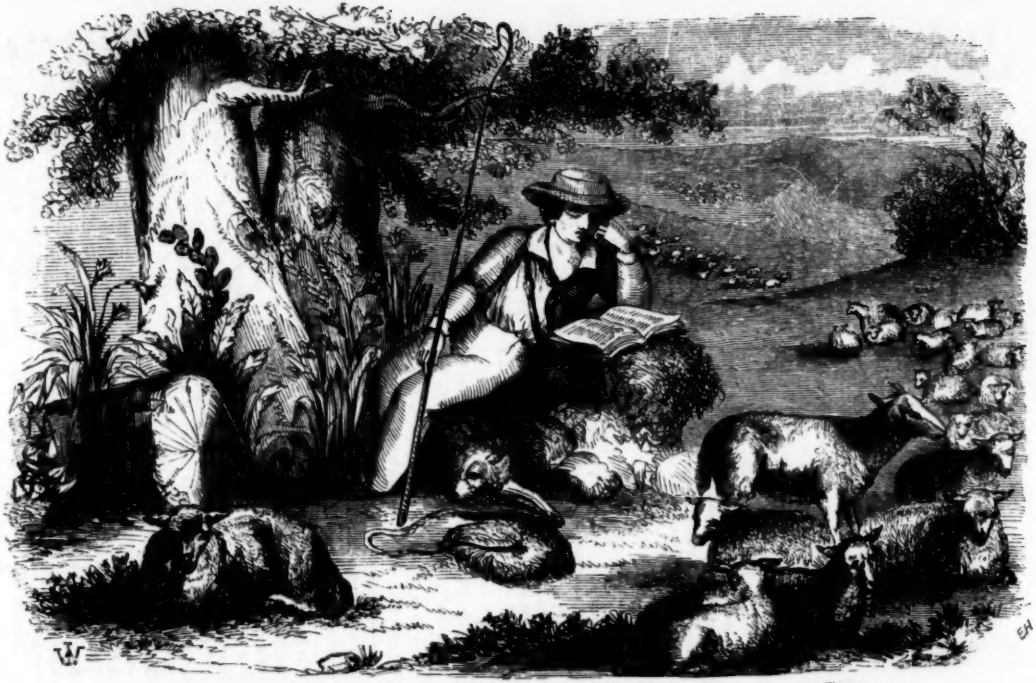
Whose God is like the Christian's God,
Who can with him compare?
He hath compassion on my soul,
And hears a beggar's prayer.

Lord Jesus, thou hast shed thy blood
For thousands such as me;
Though some despise poor beggar girls,
They're not despised by Thee.

ELIZABETH LOW.

WE have copied the above verses from the original manuscript, sent by the girl to her teacher. On the corner of the paper she says, "Let me know how my hymn will do; most of it is out of my own head." A friend connected with the Dundee Industrial School, has supplied us with the following information respecting the history and present position of the poor girl. He has also sent us a few more verses from the young writer, which our readers may see in a future number:—

"The parents of the girl have given evidence of great depravity. Her father deserted his family, and is believed to have gone to America, and her mother has been in prison once, and escaped being there a second time by leaving the town. The girl, as might be expected, was of very idle habits, leaving work when she had it, and going off to the country for days together, along with some other girls, and supporting themselves by begging, etc. Being a native of Dundee, she had a claim on the parish, and was sent to this institution by the parochial board on the 18th December, 1847; she soon gave evidence that, although her opportunities for education had been very limited, her natural abilities were of rather a high order. She continued in the institution, and was of very great service to the female teacher as an assistant, till the spring of 1849, when, on application to 'Her Majesty's Commissioners of Emigration,' by the Rt. Hon. Lord Kinnaird, she, along with four other girls, was to have gone out to Australia; but as the time of departure drew near, it was found that she would be unable to go on account of a cutaneous affection in one of her limbs, with which she was seized after the application was made for her emigration. To make up somewhat for the disappointment, the Rt. Hon. Lady Kinnaird placed her in the family of her butler, whose wife keeps the village school of Inchture, adjoining his lordship's seat, where she continues, and is giving increasing satisfaction."



SCENES IN THE HISTORY OF A RAGGED BOY.—No. V.—Life in the Bush.

Literary Notices.

Three Days in the East. By JOHN MACGREGOR, M.A. London: Seeleys, Fleet Street and Hanover Street.

An English reader, totally unacquainted with the manners and customs of Eastern countries, must have a very vague and imperfect understanding of many important passages of Scripture. Had the customs of those lands changed as rapidly and extensively as our own have done, the narratives and discoveries of modern travellers would have been divested of much of their importance and utility. But instead of this, we find that these people live much in the same way as they did in the days of the patriarchs and apostles, so that, to a great extent, they are to us the living expositors of the Sacred Writings. It is to this important fact that Mr. Macgregor's modest little volume owes its chief interest; and to say that it is interesting is only part of the truth, for, from beginning to end, *it is full of valuable instruction.* It is a record of facts and incidents connected with a three days' journey from the Nile to the Dead Sea. These occurrences—though often *in themselves* of small importance—are very valuable, as they throw a new light upon many passages of Scripture, which must, without such assistance, be imperfectly understood. The peculiar facility with which texts are introduced into the narrative, and clearly illustrated by the preceding facts—the purity of style and feeling—and the simplicity and intelligence which characterises the volume, show that the author was neither a vacant nor idle spectator during his "Three Days in the East." Sunday School teachers may turn every incident recorded to very important use in their classes; and, were the volume introduced into the children's library, it would soon become a favourite with the elder scholars. We hope it will soon pass through many editions; and this more especially as we find it stated that "the profits will be given to the Ragged Schools." We had marked several passages for quotation, but from want of space the following must suffice:—

"The market-place was a busy scene in Ramleh, and in one part of it I noticed a little boy playing on a reed-pipe, while others danced; 'children sitting in the market-place, and calling one to another, and saying, We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned to you, and ye have not wept,' Luke vii. 32; the second part of which verse was explained, when we saw a funeral a little further on; one mourner sings and the other answers...

"Many persons were returning from the bath, and I noticed in a shop the curious wooden pattens, called cob-cobs, used by the bathers in walking from one room to another. After an Eastern bath the feet require to be washed, as they are soiled in returning to the apartment where the bather's clothes are left, 'He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit,' John xiii. 10. So if we be thoroughly cleansed from the guilt of sin, being washed in 'the fountain opened for uncleanness,' our next duty is to see to our daily walk and conversation, lest our goings in the path of life be defiled by the pollution of the world."

How to Emigrate; or, The British Colonists. A Tale for all Classes, with an Appendix, forming a complete Manual for intending Colonists, and for those who may wish to assist them. By WILLIAM N. G. KINGSTON, Esq., Author of "The Prime Minister," "The Colonist," etc., etc. London: Grant & Griffith.

The Author has done honourable service to society, and particularly to intending emigrants, by the publication of this volume. At a time when so many are thirsting for correct information on the subject of emigration, and are almost bewildered among the inaccurate and ephemeral publications that have issued from the press, it is gratifying to find a gentleman with the experience of Mr. Kingston becoming the instructor of the multitude. We have for some time deferred noticing this volume, until we could afford time and space sufficient to give at least a general idea of its varied and interesting contents; but from this we are even now precluded. Suffice to say, that it is the most instructive and complete manual—not only for intending emigrants, but for all who are interested in the emigration of the poor—that we have yet seen issued from the press. We trust it may have an extensive circulation among "*all classes,*" and that many of the Author's practical and very important suggestions may be carried out.

Intelligence.

POPLAR AND BLACKWALL RAGGED SCHOOLS.

THE First Annual Meeting of these schools was held in the Town Hall, Poplar, on the 27th September, 1850, G. F. Young, Esq., in the Chair.

On opening the proceedings of the evening, the Chairman said, that he would merely say a few words on the immediate subject that had called them together. He need not remind them, that in the days in which they lived, mischiefs of various kinds, affecting most deeply the very framework of society, were actively at work. Happily, however, if the efforts that were being made were not commensurate with the danger, they were at least extending, and would ultimately meet, encounter, and overcome it. Their efforts were properly directed when they endeavoured to strike at the root of the evil—when they thus endeavoured to work upwards, and not downwards, in their educational process. He was firmly persuaded, contrary to the opinions he had formerly entertained, that it was in vain that they had laboured to make the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge what they were. It was in vain they had founded those other great seminaries of learning, expecting that from thence would flow a stream of thought and moral obligation that would cleanse and purify the lower ground. He was now satisfied that they must begin from below and work upwards, and make the toes of the man behind tread on the heels of him who was before him, in order that he might not be altogether trodden under foot. (Hear, hear.) They must have observed that all this degradation, moral and physical, was side by side with the advance of scientific knowledge, and all those things that constituted the elements of national prosperity. These matters were constantly exhibited before their eyes—they saw that Babylon rising in vastness year after year, in more than Roman splendour; and, side by side with all that, they saw the most deplorable misery, and the greatest amount of human endurance and human suffering. Could it be supposed that the oppressed and the sufferers would be always silent and contented? No; discontent, and suspicion, and disaffection would increase—those elements of future revolutions—if they were not averted. (Loud cries of Hear, hear.) It was not to be expected that with a knowledge of their relative positions and relative condition, from which they could not exclude the people, they would always remain contented. It was not safe to allow these large masses to remain in the lowest depths of degradation, while others were rolling in affluence. Their passions would become excited readily, fiercely, savagely—they would learn from others their rights—it was for them to teach them their duties. In such a course of conduct they might claim that security for the existence of pure and good order for British society; and in such a course alone could it safely be looked for. Was it possible to conceive that men who were daily witnessing such contrasts, when hordes of them, by the progress of improvements, were turned out of their miserable dwellings, in all probability to populate other places equally densely filled—was it possible that they could look with satisfaction or contentment on the prosperity of the higher classes? Would they not be ready to exclaim, in the words of one of the greatest of their poets—

"Whence comes this strange, injurious, irksome cold?
Whence this new grandeur that my eyes behold?
The widening distance that I daily see?
Hath wealth done this? then wealth's opposed to me."

He called upon them to be wise in time, lest those revolutions which had changed the face of Europe might approach their own shores. Their time would come if they did not do that which was their duty. He contended that they were bound to do so by the highest obligations that united man to man; but, if it were necessary to appeal to other considerations, he called upon them, as they valued their own interests, their families, their social institutions, their country, and all they held dear—and he now told them it was high time to step out and take that ground that became them, and to

endeavour to elevate those degraded beings, and place them in the position which Providence had designed them for, and render them useful members of the body politic.

The Secretary, W. Fairbairns, Esq., then read the Report of the Committee, which stated, that the School was commenced in June, 1848, by the teachers of the Cotton Street Sunday School; they first took the poor children into their own school, but the numbers increased until they were unable to find accommodation for them. An appeal was then made for funds, and £200 were collected for fitting up the present building, which was opened in July, 1849. On March last, a Day School was commenced, conducted by a paid master and mistress, who have now about one hundred children under their care. The Report further stated, that many of the children were much improved, some had begun to attend a place of worship, others had purchased Bibles and Hymn-books, and some who had been in prison had commenced a better course of life. The Committee proposed the formation of a Ladies' Visiting Society, and an Industrial School, which will prove two valuable auxiliaries to the important work.

The Rev. Mr. Parnell moved the adoption of the Report, and congratulated the meeting on their assembling upon common ground, where persons of all denominations were heart and hand engaged in promoting the moral and intellectual improvement of the poorest and most wretched of the community, without reference to any religious differences. He thought, looking at the progress they had already made, that they had great cause of thankfulness. The rev. gentleman then referred to the arguments that had been put forward against the establishment of Ragged Schools, and contended that the evils were few and remote, while the benefits were important and immediate. He strongly urged upon the meeting the importance of establishing a Ladies' Visiting Society, to co-operate with the labours of the managers of the Ragged Schools, and to contribute to the utmost of their means to promote their benefits and their usefulness.

Mr. Anderson, of the Ragged School Union, seconded the Motion, and referred to the recommendation in the Report that an Industrial School should be established, which would enable them to avail themselves of the advantages held out by the Emigration Committee; as, after a few months' training, the boys would be sent out to Australia free of expense. Upwards of two hundred had been already sent out, and they had received the most satisfactory information as to their progress and improvement there. Mr. Anderson gave some interesting details of the early history of some of the boys who had been sent out by the Society, showing how effectually the education of the Ragged Schools had reformed them, when all the prison discipline of this country had been ineffectual. Until they were enabled to give the lower classes a sound moral and religious education, they would never be able to accomplish any large amount of good.

Mr. Payne moved a Resolution for the appointment of a Ladies' Visiting Committee, to superintend the Female Ragged School, and to take steps for the establishment of an Industrial School. For the benefit of his young friends he would give their objects briefly; they were—"preservation," to keep these poor children out of prison; "situation," to fit them for taking such positions in society as they were fitted for; "emigration," to send them where they could earn an honest livelihood abroad; and "salvation," to fit them for another and a better world. The learned gentleman made an able and amusing address in behalf of the Ragged Schools, and was greeted with loud applause from all parts of the room.

Several other addresses were afterwards delivered, and thanks having been voted to Mr. Young, the Meeting separated.

EAST GREENWICH RAGGED SCHOOLS.

On Wednesday, October 9th, 1850, a Meeting on behalf of the above schools was held in the Literary Institution, Blackheath, Capt. Rowley, R.N., in the Chair.

On opening the proceedings of the evening, the Chairman stated that he would not dwell upon the advantages and usefulness of Ragged Schools, for that had long been established. They had been liberally patronized by Her Majesty and Prince Albert. They are also supported by the Archbishop of

Canterbury and all those interested in the welfare of the people. He then read several extracts from the Annual Report of the Ragged School Union, from which it appeared that Her Majesty and the Prince had given £100, and the Government had granted to one hundred and fifty of the children free passages to Australia. He would then ask of them, were any persons bold enough to say that Ragged Schools are an evil? There was one great evil from which the Ragged Schools suffered, viz., from too many lukewarm friends. Yet when he looked around him, and saw so many influential persons present, he could not help thinking that though the friends of the East Greenwich Ragged Schools were few they need not despair, for God was with them, and would most surely vouchsafe his blessing. To those who had done much in the cause, and encountered many difficulties, he would say, they had God's promise that every effort made for the promotion of his glory would meet with its reward. He then related several interesting anecdotes of children connected with the East Greenwich schools, and concluded by urging upon the meeting the duty of liberally supporting them.

Major Rutherford, the Secretary, then gave a verbal report of the schools. He stated they were opened in 1847. They are situated in Norfolk Place, to the east of Greenwich Hospital, in the midst of a population of ten thousand; comprising one of the poorest districts in the vicinity of London. The Evening Ragged School is open three evenings each week, conducted by voluntary teachers; the average attendance is about eighty. The Infant Day School, conducted by a paid master, has had an average attendance, for the last six months, of sixty boys and seventy girls. This is superintended by a Ladies' Committee, the members of which visit it alternately, and also collect funds sufficient to defray the principal amount of the master's salary, and other incidental expenses. Besides a sound religious education, the children are instructed in writing, arithmetic, etc.

The Committee commenced work at Clarke's Buildings, but finding the accommodation too limited, were induced to occupy their present site in Norfolk Place, the most eligible, and, in fact, the only one procurable. The Committee have, as is generally the case in the commencement of all similar undertakings, been forced into expenses beyond what were originally contemplated; so that now they are left with a debt to pay amounting to nearly £70, and to assist in rescinding which the present meeting had been called. The building is now completed, and the schools in active operation; and the Committee come before the public with a sanguine hope that those who have not hitherto subscribed, or possibly been aware of the existence of the schools, may be induced to contribute, either as donors to the general fund, or annual subscribers to the Ladies' Infant School.

The meeting was afterwards addressed by the Rev. Mr. Pizey, Col. Alexander, Rev. Mr. Fenn, Rev. Mr. Canney, and Mr. Anderson, of the Ragged School Union.

We trust that this meeting may give a new impetus to the Ragged School work in East Greenwich. Our friends there have hitherto laboured under many difficulties and discouragements; encountering coldness and estrangement from those who ought to have been most zealous in helping them onward; but we sincerely hope that the piety and zeal manifested by the Rev. Mr. Fenn, Capt. Rowley, and those other gentlemen belonging to the neighbourhood, may be the means, under God, of stirring up others in that wealthy locality, to imitate their example, by supplying the Committee with the necessary funds, and securing for them a large increase to their present inefficient staff of voluntary labourers.

MINT STREET RAGGED SCHOOL.—IGNORANCE AND CRUELTY.

On Monday, the 30th of September, two actions were brought before Mr. Clive, at the Southwark County Court, by the Committee of the Union Street Chapel Sunday School. Mr. Stoddart was engaged for the prosecution, and Mr. Binns for the defence. Mr. Stoddart stated, that he appeared on behalf of Mr. George Izod, of 180, High Street, Borough, who represented the Finance Committee of the Branch Sunday and Ragged Schools, in Mitre Court, Mint Street, to complain of the smoke and

noxious vapour intentionally used by the defendant, John Beavis, hearth-rug manufacturer, of 27, Mint Street, who rented the floor underneath the said school. The damages were laid at £5, and a jury was empaneled at the defendant's suit. Mr. Joseph Smith, 16, Mint Street, proved the occupation of the premises by Mr. Izod. Messrs. Bradford, (the superintendent,) Press, and Johnson, stated their having seen Beavis, on several successive Sundays, use a red-hot ladle, and pour into it some chemical compound, whereby a noxious vapour was raised, which caused violent coughing and soreness of the chest, etc., in both teachers and scholars. The most important evidence was that of Mr. John Charrington, a teacher, who proved that on the Sunday afternoon, the 30th of June, he observed Beavis come under the school-room stairs, and look round to see that he was unobserved. He then gave a whistle, and Thomas Bodington handed him a red-hot ladle, into which Beavis poured the contents of a phial, the effluvia from which almost choked witness, and caused the dismissal of the children. They then shut the door, and in crossing the yard, Bodington said, "*That will do it stunning.*" Mr. Binns then took some technical objections, which were overruled by his Honour, and no witnesses being called for the defence, the jury found for the plaintiff the full amount of damages claimed, and costs. Another action was brought against the same defendant for damages to the mistress of the Infant Day School, who for upwards of two months had been subjected to the same treatment. His Honour commented severely on the conduct of the defendant, and the jury returned a verdict for the full amount claimed, and expressed their deep regret that the damages had not been rated higher.

RAGGED VISIT TO CLAYTON PARK.

THROUGH the kind liberality of Sir Harry Verney, about two hundred children belonging to the Westminster Ragged Schools, were lately taken on a visit to his residence at Clayton Park. On the morning in question, long before their usual hour for waking, the young tourists were all astir, busily engaged in adjusting their externals, and despite of rough patches and ill-fitted gifts, determined to make as near an approach to gentility as circumstances would allow. On arriving at Claydon Railway Station, accompanied by a number of their teachers, they were received by Sir Harry and Lady Verney, and by the children of the Claydon Schools, with flags waving and loud hurrahs. They then formed in procession, and walked up to Claydon House, when they assembled in the hall, and after singing a hymn, were addressed by the Rev. W. R. Freemantle, Rector of Claydon, and the Rev. Mr. Walter, Curate of Waddesden. The children then partook of a plentiful repast of meat, plum puddings, apple pies, etc., after which they retired to the park for the day's amusement. They manifested the most lively interest in the natural objects by which many of them for the first time in their lives saw themselves surrounded, and took fully as much pleasure in examining these, as in playing with the balls and swings which had been provided for their amusement. At five o'clock the train arrived, and the whole party returned to London highly gratified by their excursion, and grateful to their generous benefactor. The conduct of the young people was highly creditable; and the children of Claydon, as well as many other of its inhabitants who came forward on the occasion, manifested the warmest interest in and the kindliest feelings toward their London visitors.

HOLLOWAY RAGGED SCHOOL.

As soon as it was known that the worthy founder and superintendent of the above school, Mr. Henry Biddle, in consequence of bad health, intended to emigrate to Australia, a Tea Meeting was held at the house of one of the teachers on the 16th ult., to take leave of him, and present him with a Commentary on the Holy Scriptures, value £5, in which was beautifully written the following appropriate inscription:—

Presented to
MR. HENRY BIDDLE,
(On the occasion of his leaving England for Australia,)
By the Teachers of the Sunday School
in connection with the
HOLLOWAY RAGGED SCHOOL,
As a small remembrance of the high esteem which they bear towards him for the unimpeachable excellence of his moral character, and to mark their appreciation of the unwearied exertions he has ever displayed for the welfare of immortal souls.

HOXTON RAGGED SCHOOLS.

A TEA Meeting was held in these schools on Wednesday, October 16th, 1850, when upwards of three hundred and twenty children and youths were supplied with tea, bread and butter, and plum cake, in a most liberal manner. A more interesting scene has seldom been witnessed; the hungry were fed, and their hearts cheered by the kind friends who had volunteered to supply this gratuitously. The magic lantern was exhibited in the evening, and their delight was unbounded. This has so much encouraged the friends of these schools, that they intend giving them a dinner at Christmas. The whole closed with the National Anthem and three vociferous cheers.

THE YORK BAZAAR.

THE object of this bazaar, which has been countenanced with patronage the most distinguished and influential, and favoured with circumstances the most auspicious, was to assist the Committee of the Ragged Schools to pay off the debt incurred by them in purchasing their present extensive premises in Marygate. The total liability thus incurred was £565, and of this sum the Committee borrowed £450, on mortgage, at four and a half per cent., the mortgagee agreeing to accept the principal at periods the most convenient for the Committee to pay it off. Whilst, however, the more immediate and primary aim was to liquidate this debt, it was also contemplated at the same time to endeavour, through the instrumentality of this bazaar, to raise a fund for the future purposes of the institution, in consequence of the steadily growing demands upon it. The first day's exhibition was most successful, the results quite reaching, if not exceeding the anticipations of the most ardent of its promoters. The Committee issued two classes of tickets—viz., one shilling tickets for the day and half-crown tickets for the week. Those of the former sold on Tuesday realised £41. 8*s*. 6*d*.; the latter £28. 16*s*. 6*d*.; total £70. 5*s*. The sale of work, etc., was equally satisfactory, the proceeds amounting to about £300. The precise total of the receipts of Tuesday was £371. 9*s*. 5*d*. On the following day the bazaar was also open in the evening, when the Guildhall was brilliantly lighted with gas, and the great stained glass window specially illuminated for the occasion. The whole scene was very effective, and was greatly enjoyed by a large concourse of spectators. The total receipts for admission on Wednesday amounted to £52. 12*s*. 10*d*., viz., during the day £40. 17*s*. 10*d*., in the evening £11. 15*s*. The receipts at the stalls amounted to £294. 5*s*. 8½*d*., making the sum realised on Wednesday, altogether, £346. 18*s*. 6½*d*. The total receipts on Thursday amounted to £170, the admission tickets sold realising £26. 10*s*. 6*d*., and the proceeds derived from the sale of work, etc., being £143. 10*s*. 6*d*. Thus the total sum realised by the three days' sale (Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday) was upwards of £888. The bazaar was also open on Friday, and we believe the whole amount realised from beginning to end, has somewhat exceeded *a thousand pounds!*

SHERIFF WATSON'S NEW SCHOOL FOR JUVENILE DELINQUENTS.

A SECOND preliminary meeting of juvenile delinquents has been held in the Soup Kitchen, Loch Street, which has been granted for Sheriff Watson's new experimental school. Besides the Sheriff, there were present the Dean of Guild, Rev. Mr. Baxter, Mr. A. W. Chalmers, Mr. Ness, etc. About thirty young thieves were present. A plentiful supply of coffee and rolls was provided, and they appeared greatly delighted with their treat. While Mr. Baxter asked a blessing perfect quietness prevailed. The Sheriff urged the boys to come back next morning at eight, to be fed, taught, and amused all day, and get home in the evening at seven. They would have a little work to do; they would get abundance of food, useful instruction, and plenty of play, (this statement evidently delighted the youngsters.) The school now to be instituted, which was the most singular ever commenced in any place, would be kept open for two months, and, by that time, he hoped employment would be got for the big boys, and the younger might be transferred to one of the Juvenile Industrial Schools. On the Sheriff's appealing to them whether they wished to live honestly or not, vehement responses of "Yes, yes," were returned.